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## Soldier: The Lost Colony



horse

adventure

16thcentury

76 2 3

### Chapter 1 by Alice Marie Bride

'Twas late in the evening on a summer's night, when the sun was just about to set. The battalion was advancing at a rather slow pace-- my legs were beginning to ache. My rider was not a slim one, nor was he kind. He always wore golden spurs, whether for show or for lethality, I was never sure. They were as sharp as they were shiny. I often felt their razor tips. A simple misstep, and they dug into my flanks. My once beautiful rump was now scarred and lesioned, but thankfully my coat was black. The scar tissue knotted between my hip bones and soft flank flesh, making it difficult to walk comfortably.

As soon as the sun fell behind the pines, and we could no longer see the path in front of us, my rider barked a loud command, making me startle. I stumbled, tripping over an unseen hazard. With a loud thud, i fell to my fore legs, knees painfully scraping across the ground. My rider, a first class general, rolled off over my head and hit the ground in front of me. I felt a sharp pain in the left side of my head as General struck me, grabbing my reigns and yanking my head upwards. He sputtered and spat, cursing, moaning, and batting me roughly. My knees were cut open and the blood oozed down my legs, but no one seemed to care. General ordered that the rest of the miserable fools behind us stop and make camp for the night, and slung a small stable

boy towards me.

"Tend to that beast," he grunted.

The small boy carried a small lamp that emitted just enough light to see my wounds.

"How did you end up here?" he asked. "I must have been a gorgeous animal."

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I snorted, frightening him some. He applied some pressure to my knees with a damp cloth. The pain was great, but it ebbed away slowly. The kindness in the little boy's hands was tremendous, outweighing the sadness in his eyes. A group of young men passed, dressed in pressed uniforms.

"Give him a good scrub would ya, you worm."

"You aren't even fit to be near that beast!"

"No worries boys- that animal isn't worth a thing now."

The little boy teared up as the men walked away, and slowly washed my wounds.

"I don't know how I ended up here either," he sighed. "My name is Hans, by the way."

This rung a tiny bell- for I too was once known as Hans. Now it was 'Mongrel,' 'Beast,' or 'Animal.' Before I was sent to be General's carrier, I was known as Soldier. The word was embroidered into my now worn chest harness- the letters almost indistinguishable. The boy had just removed the rags from my knees before a loud explosion sounded throughout the camp, and cries of surprise jolted the battalion.

## Chapter 2 by Alice Marie Bride



**\*A scout has sounded a cannon alarm- he had spotted a wounded courier in the woods. The courier- hardly breathing, was clutching a bloody letter in his hands... A letter from Roanoke.\***

There was a rather skinny boy- his uniform too big- sprinting through the dim lit and undefined paths. He was screeching and waving his arms all around. The little boy tending to me stumbled backwards, crashing into a bucket filled with sudsy water. The courier sprinting about finally reached his destination- right at the General's feet.

The General spat in boredom, looking blankly at the skinny courier's gaunt face. I couldn't hear what the poor boy was saying, but his lips moved frantically, fear emanating from his presence. The boy tending to me struggled to get out of the bucket. I gave him a little nudge, tipping the bucket and all. He huffed, coughing out soap.

The General made a sharp nod, and some men dressed in white linens dragged the convulsing courier off to half-pitched tents on rotten poles. I shivered as the night was growing colder, and

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*I shall never forget the kindness that you have shown me, the ragged boy they called Hans.*

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